

Mr. Speaker, development of a National Drought Policy Act is long overdue. I am pleased that H.R. 3035 addresses this problem and urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, let the RECORD note that the author of the bill the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN) is chairing a subcommittee meeting with the Committee on Appropriations and is not able to be here with us today.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3035 which would establish an advisory commission to provide advice and recommendations to help create a coordinated federal drought mitigation and response policy. Currently, droughts tend to receive minimal advance attention and are primarily addressed ad hoc in a crisis management mode.

The commission established by the bill would recommend ways to coordinate the numerous federal agencies that have a role in droughts. It would also help ensure that federal efforts would compliment state and local programs without diminishing state water rights or environmental protection.

H.R. 3035 builds upon the recent work of the Western Water Policy Review Advisory Commission and the Western Governors' Association. Both organizations have recommended the creation of an interagency task force to develop an integrated national drought policy plan that emphasizes risk management.

I appreciate the efforts of my colleagues on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, having no further requests for time, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3035, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to provide extraneous material on H.R. 3035.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

URGING CONGRESS AND PRESIDENT TO FULLY FUND GOVERNMENT'S OBLIGATION UNDER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the

resolution (H. Res. 399) urging the Congress and the President to work to fully fund the Federal Government's obligation under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 399

Whereas Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 334 F. Supp. 1247 (E. Dist. Pa. 1971), and Mills v. Board of Education of the District of Columbia, 348 F. Supp. 866 (Dist. D. C. 1972), found that children with disabilities are guaranteed an equal opportunity to an education under the 14th amendment to the Constitution;

Whereas the Congress responded to these court decisions by passing the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (enacted as Public Law 94-142), now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), to ensure a free, appropriate public education for children with disabilities;

Whereas the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act provides that the Federal, State, and local governments are to share in the expense of educating children with disabilities and authorizes the Federal Government to pay up to 40 percent of the national average per pupil expenditure for children with disabilities;

Whereas the Federal Government has provided only 7, 9, and 11 percent of the maximum State grant allocation for educating children with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in the last 3 years, respectively;

Whereas the national average cost of educating a special education student (\$12,002) is more than twice the national average per pupil cost (\$5,955);

Whereas research indicates that children who are effectively taught, including effective instruction aimed at acquiring literacy skills, and who receive positive early interventions demonstrate academic progress, and are significantly less likely to be referred to special education;

Whereas, if the appropriation for part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1411 et seq.) exceeds \$4,100,000,000 for a fiscal year, a local educational agency may reduce its local spending on special education for such fiscal year by an amount equal to 20 percent of the amount that exceeds the prior year's appropriation so long as the local educational agency is not failing to comply with the requirements of part B of such Act, as determined by the State educational agency;

Whereas the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act has been successful in achieving significant increases in the number of children with disabilities who receive a free, appropriate public education; and

Whereas the current level of Federal funding to States and localities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is contrary to the goal of ensuring that children with disabilities receive a quality education: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives urges the Congress and the President, working within the constraints of the balanced budget agreement, to give programs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.) higher priority among Federal education programs by working to fund the maximum State grant allocation for educating children with disabilities under such Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) and the

gentleman from California (Mr. MARTINEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING).

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The Committee will now consider H. Res. 399, a resolution urging the Congress and the President to fully fund the Federal Government's responsibility under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. This resolution was introduced by the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. BASS) and I am pleased to be an original cosponsor.

I would like to start out by recognizing the efforts of my friend and colleague the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD). He has been a leader in helping move this resolution through our committee in a bipartisan manner. He has been a strong voice for providing fiscal relief to local communities, which not only pay their share of special education costs but most of the Federal share as well.

For those who may not be aware, in 1975, when the original legislation was passed, the Congress of the United States indicated that over several years they would fund 40 percent of the excess costs for special education. Up until 3 years ago, they were funding about 6 percent. I am happy to say that we got about a 77-percent increase in the last 3 years. But it is still a long, long way from the 40 percent that was promised for the excess costs of educating a special education child.

This unpaid Federal share means that the local school district has to do the funding. It also then means that the local school district has to take that money from all other programs in order to fund our share of special education. In many districts that is 55 percent of their entire budget. And so, I am hoping that we will continue the trend that we have had in the last 3 years.

Unfortunately, when the President sent up his budget, he level funded special education. But what level-funding really means is a dramatic cut. Because if you consider inflation and then, above all, consider the new children who will be coming into special education through increased enrollment, it means that we are going to fall way short if we would follow his budget.

I am hoping that with the program that came from my committee, dealing with literacy, with family literacy particularly, that in the long run we can find a way to eliminate an awful lot of people from ever getting into special education. Because, unfortunately, many of our special education students today are there simply because they have a reading difficulty. There is no reason for that to happen.

We know now that most youngsters can learn to read. With the family literacy program that we are including in our legislative initiative from our committee, hopefully we can eliminate an awful lot who would normally fall into special education.

But now is the time where we thank Mrs. MCCARTHY, who testified with the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. BASS) at our hearing on this a few weeks ago. I look forward to bipartisan effort to make sure that we eventually get to that 40 percent of excess cost coming from the Federal Government.

This year we should be able to get, for the first time ever, at the level where the local schools will be able to reduce their spending on special education. When we meet that magic figure, and this year I believe we need \$300 million to get to that figure, they then can, for the first time, reduce their spending on special education. It does not, however, allow the state to reduce their spending on special education.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to start out by saying that I am pleased to rise in strong support of this resolution which is before the House. H.Res. 399 is a truly bipartisan bill and should meet with the approval of Members from both sides of the aisle.

The chairman a moment ago was I think commendable in commending the Members on his side of the aisle that worked very hard for this. But I do not think it is any secret that there is no one that has worked harder for the full funding of IDEA than the chairman himself, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING).

Mr. Speaker, full funding of IDEA is a goal which has been around with us for a long time. It has the strong support of all Members in this body. As many Members here know, presently the Federal Government provides only 11 percent of the excess cost of educating a child with disability.

The goal that we set for ourselves, as the chairman has alluded to in 1979, in 1975, when Congress first passed IDEA's predecessor, the education for all handicapped children, it was to provide 40 of the excess cost of educating a child with disability. Unfortunately, Congress has been unable to meet this goal despite the hard work of many Members from both sides of the aisle.

With this goal in mind, I believe the strong statements that this resolution make is vitally important. Clearly, the needs of children with disabilities and the costs associated with ensuring that they receive a free and appropriate public education are important factors in determining if we are to have a society where all those with disabilities and those without have a chance to succeed and become economically contributing adults.

In closing, I want to salute the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) again, the gentleman from California (Mr. RIGGS) and along with the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD) for their long-standing efforts to increase funding for this very important bill and for the valuable work during the committee process.

I also want to thank especially the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD) for his hard work on fashioning the resolution, which I believe gained bipartisan support. I urge all Members support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. BASS) the author of the resolution.

Mr. BASS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in very strong support of House Resolution 399, a resolution that would make the full funding of special education a high priority of this Congress.

I want to thank the distinguished chairman and gentleman from California for making this a truly bipartisan resolution.

□ 1615

The idea came to me as I listened to the State of the Union address in January that the President delivered, and he talked about the importance of education. And as one who comes from a State like New Hampshire which depends on funding for education, 98 percent of the funding coming from the property tax base at the local level, nothing hits the property taxpayers worse in New Hampshire than special education. It really should not be that way, because special education originally was mandated to be paid for at the rate of approximately 40 percent.

As we heard the chairman and the ranking member mention in their speeches, that has been chronically underfunded. Indeed, funding of special education has been the mother of all unfunded mandates of this government for the last 25 years. I think this resolution is way overdue and it should be passed today.

Let me just point out that in some towns in my State, special education costs make up half of the entire education budget for a given town. This puts pressure on school district administrators, on students, and perhaps most unfortunately on the parents of developmentally disabled students in a small community.

I believe that as Congress sets its priorities for new education spending, that fully funding the existing mandates that we have outstanding today should come ahead of new education funding for new programs in education. Fully funding special education in New Hampshire alone would increase funding from \$17 million a year to \$68 million a year. That, Mr. Speaker, would make a significant impact on the whole education picture in New Hampshire. I am sure the same is true in every other State in the country.

I hope, Mr. Speaker, that today the House will pass this resolution which has been introduced by me, supported by the committee, amended to make it as bipartisan as possible, because we all recognize the importance of special education firstly; and, secondly, the importance of fully funding the Fed-

eral Government's commitment to this important program.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) who is a strong, strong supporter of everything that benefits all the young people of our country.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. MARTINEZ) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, as one of the strong supporters of IDEA, I am pleased to support this resolution. I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING), the gentleman from California (Mr. RIGGS), the gentleman from California (Mr. MARTINEZ), the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY), the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD) and the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. BASS) for working on this resolution. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act represents this country's commitment to ensure that all children, including children with disabilities, are entitled to a free and appropriate public education. I support IDEA and I support more funding for this program. This resolution, unfortunately, does not include two provisions that I think need to be addressed. Although I support the resolution and will vote for it, I wish that it could have addressed two issues.

The most important principle missing in the resolution is that we should not take away from other educational programs in order to fully fund IDEA. The needs of our public schools remain high and we should not rob Peter to pay Paul. In the past, we have seen efforts to shift funding from other educational accounts to IDEA without changing the bottom line.

The second principle missing from the resolution is that we should urge the localities once the \$4.1 billion appropriation mark is triggered to spend their 20 percent of relief on education. Under current law, localities may use 20 percent of any increase in IDEA funding above the trigger to offset their current effort on special education. However, this relief can be used for roads, jails, tax relief and so forth. There is no guarantee that any of the local offset would be used to recycle the money to other educational programs.

Even more of a concern is that transferring funds from other Federal education programs to increase funding for IDEA could actually result in a net reduction in total spending for elementary and secondary education. If we pursue a strategy of reducing the funding of other education programs to fully fund IDEA, we will risk a 20 percent net reduction in our investment in elementary and secondary education programs at the expense of children, both disabled and nondisabled, that these programs serve.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support the bipartisan resolution and hope that we can continue a bipartisan effort to

fully fund IDEA without jeopardizing our investment in other educational programs.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. McKEON), one of my great subcommittee chairmen.

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.Res. 399 which calls upon Congress and the President to fulfill our commitment to some of our Nation's neediest children, those with disabilities.

For too long, Washington has shirked its responsibility to provide our local school districts with the funds necessary to carry out the expensive mandate created with the enactment of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

In my home State of California, the cost of educating an estimated 610,000 children with disabilities is a staggering \$3.3 billion. But the Federal Government contributes only \$413 million, which translates to only 12.5 percent of the total cost. This, after saying that they would fund 40 percent of the cost.

Even more alarming is the impact of this Federal mandate on our local school districts. For example, the Federal Government picks up only 5 percent of the estimated \$7.6 million price tag for educating the nearly 1,200 children in the William S. Hart High School District, the district I served on the local school board in my congressional district.

To make matters worse, the President level-funded IDEA in his fiscal year 1999 budget while calling for \$20 billion to fund a laundry list of new Federal education pet projects.

If the President would first fund the special education mandate, which was the responsibility of the Federal Government years ago when this bill was passed, our communities would have the funds to do the things the President proposes, such as building new schools, hiring more teachers, reducing class size and buying more computers. I say the first thing that we should do is fully fund the IDEA bill, and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD), the gentleman who helped shepherd the bill through the committee.

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that here in Washington sometimes education becomes a subject of controversy, when most Americans would look at us as politicians and say, what could be controversial about education.

We all know that there is nothing more important in the world than that our precious children receive the best education that they can so that they can make the most of themselves in

every way and that we can compete as a nation against every other country in the world as they educate their children.

Of even less controversy, if that is possible, is the notion that children who have particular challenges, whether they are children with mental retardation or they have social or emotional problems, whether they have learning disabilities, speech impediments, what have you, that we as a society want to go overboard and do more for those kids than we do for other kids, if that is possible, because of the challenges that face them. None of that is controversial. We are all in support of that. What does get controversial is when we talk about whether it is the Federal responsibility or the State responsibility or the local responsibility to support certain aspects of education, and that is in fact very controversial.

Most Republicans feel very strongly that the States should determine the curriculum, should determine the basics of education and that the localities should run the schools and make the decisions about hiring and firing and how they want to run their local school districts. But the President has proposed Federal responsibilities that would be new. He has proposed that the Federal Government get involved in school construction, that the Federal Government get involved in hiring teachers.

Back to what is not controversial, IDEA is not controversial. The Congress 23 years ago said we have got to give these kids everything we can give them, the school districts are mandated to do that, and just last year, I believe it was, we reauthorized IDEA, I think with maybe one negative vote, if not unanimously, I think it was one negative vote out of 435 of us. This proposal, the Bass proposal, says let us put all the controversy aside and let us do what we agree on, let us finally fully fund special education, take this enormous burden that we have imposed on the States and shoulder our fair share as the Congress, and then the beautiful part of it is that every school district in America, so relieved of this burdensome Federal responsibility, has the opportunity to make a specific local decision what to do with the money it would have otherwise had to dedicate to special education and if they need a new roof, put a new roof on; if they need to hire new teachers, do that; if they need computers, do that.

This, I think, is a complete win-win proposal, that we help the kids in America who need special education, who need special attention, help them the most and then at the same time free up every locality, every local school district in the country to then tailor-fit its budget to its particular needs.

I urge support of the Bass resolution.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to respond to the gentleman from Pennsylvania who just

spoke. I want to make it very clear here why the Federal Government is involved in this. I do not think the Federal Government has ever in any of the legislation we have passed tried to set curriculum for local schools. In fact, we very much have stayed away from that.

The fact is that local schools and local school districts were not educating these disabled children. There was a court case that went to the Supreme Court, where the Supreme Court found that there were millions of young children throughout this country that were disabled who were not receiving a vital education; more importantly even unequal education. They were being pushed into back rooms and basement classrooms, sometimes not even being dealt with at all. As a result, the court found that these children were entitled to a full and meaningful education.

And so then Congress acted, because the local districts and school districts would not. But they did not set any curriculum. What they did was tell the local schools that they would have to educate these children. But in doing so, they recognized one of the main reasons why a lot of these local school districts and local jurisdictions did not educate these young people was because it was much more costly to educate them.

The Federal Government, in recognizing that it was much more costly to educate them, then developed the idea that there was a certain burden, a responsibility, you might say, that the Federal Government had, not putting a burden on the local school district other than that they were mandated by the Supreme Court action that they had to educate these children. That was the burden, not what the Federal Government did. The Federal Government then decided that they would fund 40 percent of this.

Now that becomes the crux of the situation we are in today and why we need legislation that decries the lack of funding on the part of the Federal Government for this particular program. We are only trying to get to that 40 percent that was initially agreed to that has never been attained, and, as many of the speakers here today have said, there has only been 11 percent ever reached in totality for that funding; I think that that is why we are here today.

But I want to make it very clear, the Federal Government is trying to alleviate, or we as Members of Congress through this resolution are trying to alleviate a problem that was created basically initially by the lack of education of these young people in those local districts.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. SNOWBARGER).

Mr. SNOWBARGER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong support for House Resolution 399. I am pleased to be an original co-sponsor of this responsible legislation. In 1973, Congress created the original special education program that mandated States to provide equal education for all students. Congress then pledged to pay 40 percent of the increased costs incurred for complying with this new Federal law and promptly reneged on its end of the bargain.

Since the inception of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act more than 20 years ago, Congress has paid for less than 10 percent of the costs we promised we would assume. It is high time for Congress to correct this problem and ease the burden this mandate places on States and local school boards.

□ 1630

Over the past 20 plus years more than \$115 billion should have been provided to the local schools to pay for this unfunded mandate. This \$115 billion would have provided necessary funds to cover increased special education costs and would have allowed our locally-elected school board members to direct their State and local funding to pay for local priorities instead of unfunded federal mandates.

While I cannot do anything to reverse decisions made before I became a Member of this body, I believe we now have the opportunity to act responsibly to remedy this negligence. The failure of Congress to live up to our end of the bargain is a disgrace. Passage of this legislation is a good start toward correcting this problem.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 399.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. RIGGS), another one of our subcommittee chairs.

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for yielding this time to me, and I want to join the gentleman and several other colleagues in rising to support this important resolution that is more than symbolism. It is critically needed and, I think, very urgent legislation, and I want to salute my good friend, classmate of sorts, the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. BASS) for his leadership on this particular issue.

I can tell my colleagues that as one of the principal authors of last year's IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act legislation, the so-called IDEA amendments of 1997, that I believe that this resolution, the Bass resolution, is the next logical step in fulfilling the promise of these amendments which were intended to improve the educational opportunity and the educational outcomes for children with disabilities, and I regret to say, because this legislation is very much bipartisan in nature, it was approved and advanced to the committee process on a voice-vote basis beginning in the subcommittee that I chaired, that I just

regret that this legislation is at least necessitated in part because of the President's budget proposal to the Congress to level fund the IDEA program at a rate that I do not think will keep pace with inflation. And not wanting to read too much into the President's budget proposal, but I have to wonder how he can justify level funding or nominal increase in funding for IDEA on the one hand with his proposal for a host of new programs, additional categorical programs funded by Federal taxpayers on the other hand, particularly when the latter, the proposal for all these new programs, and I know they all sound well, and I am sure they have all been focused grouped and that they are in part politically or poll driven, but that proposal assumes this windfall of Federal revenue resulting from settlement of the tobacco class action litigation, and I do not think that there is any Member in this body who can really make that assumption because that legislation at the present time is obviously problematical.

But back on the point, IDEA works. It is not some new untested program like so many of the ones that the President has proposed. As the gentleman has pointed out, since IDEA was enacted in 1975 the number of children with disabilities who have gone on to college has tripled, and the unemployment rate for individuals with disabilities who are now in their 20s is almost half that of other individuals who do not benefit from IDEA.

Other speakers have testified about the fact that IDEA remains a largely underfunded federal mandate, sort of the mother, if my colleagues will, of all unfunded mandates imposed by the Congress on state and local educational agencies, and we need to address that problem, and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) spoke of the trigger or threshold of 4.1 billion, and that figure is reachable this year, and it would in turn free up local and State education funding for other worthwhile activities.

So I say let us support the Bass resolution, let us make good on that long overdue promise to State and local educational agencies. Let us tell the President, no, we will not turn back on school children with disabilities, and we will not leave local taxpayers to foot the bill for special education.

Support the Bass resolution. Make IDEA funding a top and not the top priority for education.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all, I am proud to say that Pennsylvania was ahead of the Federal Government when it came to IDEA. However, that too was a court decision, before they got around to making that decision on the Federal level. But for 20 years I sat in the minority asking the majority both in the Committee on Education and Labor and on the Committee on the Budget along with the

gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) to please fund the 40 percent promised. We've got to make sure we understand we are talking about the 40 percent of excess costs. We are not talking about 40 percent of the costs for special education. We are talking about 40 percent of the excess costs to educate a special education student in relationship to a student in general education. It is the only curriculum mandate from the Federal level. It is important that everybody out there listening understands that, because we get blamed for every curriculum problem that they may have in a local district. The only federal mandate as far as curriculum is concerned is special education.

I told the President on several occasions that if he wants a legacy—if he wants a positive legacy in education—the way to get it is to make sure that he works with us to fully fund that 40 percent of excess costs.

I am happy to say that we are here in a bipartisan effort. Everybody wants to make sure that we not only help the special education child. What I do not want to see happen, and what is beginning to happen because parents of students that are not in special education are beginning to say "Where is our money going that we want for this and that?" The school district has to say, "Well, we have to fund what the Federal Government mandated." So it is a bipartisan effort to make sure that we carry our share of the special education financial burden. I am happy to support Congressman BASS' resolution, I would hope that we could get a hundred percent of the entire Congress supporting this resolution, since it is a bipartisan effort.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 399, a resolution urging Congress and the President to fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Act, or IDEA. I want to commend the gentleman from New Hampshire, Mr. BASS, for all his hard work and efforts in bringing this important resolution to the floor today.

In 1975, when Congress passed the original IDEA bill, it made an historic commitment to support children and families with special education needs. At that time, Congress also committed the Federal government to providing 40 percent of the funding for the IDEA mandates on local communities. Today, the Federal government provides a mere 9 percent of the necessary funding. And for Fiscal Year 1999, President Clinton's budget flatlines IDEA funding. This is shameful.

It is incumbent upon us here in Congress to maintain our financial commitment to IDEA, and to provide the money our schools and communities need to provide services to individuals with disabilities and their families. If the President provided IDEA with the full 40 percent in Federal funding, local schools would have more money to spend on other initiatives, including school construction, hiring new teachers, decreasing class sizes and buying more computers.

By passing this bill today, we reinforce our commitment to providing the means to educate the students who need our help most. I urge my colleagues to vote for this bill, and

when the time comes, to support full funding for IDEA.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to express my opposition to H. Res. 399, the resolution calling for full-funding of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). My opposition to this act should in no way be interpreted as opposition to increased spending on education. However, the way to accomplish this worthy goal is to allow parents greater control over education resources by cutting taxes, thus allowing parents to devote more of their resources to educating their children in such a manner as they see fit. Massive tax cuts for the American family, not increased spending on federal programs, should be this Congress' top priority.

The drafters of this bill claim that increasing federal spending on IDEA will allow local school districts to spend more money on other educational priorities. However, because an increase in federal funding will come from the same taxpayers who currently fund the IDEA mandate at the state and local level, increasing federal IDEA funding will not necessarily result in a net increase of education funds available for other programs. In fact, the only way to combine full federal funding of IDEA with an increase in expenditures on other programs by state and localities is through massive tax increases at the federal, state, and/or local level.

Rather than increasing federal spending, Congress should focus on returning control over education to the American people by enacting the Family Education Freedom Act (H.R. 1816), which provides parents with a \$3,000 per child tax credit to pay for K-12 education expenses. Passage of this act would especially benefit parents whose children have learning disabilities as those parents have the greatest need to devote a large portion of their income toward their child's education.

The Family Education Freedom Act will allow parents to develop an individualized education plan that will meet the needs of their own child. Each child is a unique person and we must seriously consider whether disabled children's special needs can be best met by parents, working with local educators, free from interference from Washington or federal educators. After all, an increase in expenditures cannot make a Washington bureaucrat know or love a child as much as that child's parent.

It is time for Congress to restore control over education to the American people. The only way to accomplish this goal is to defund education programs that allow federal bureaucrats to control America's schools. Therefore, I call on my colleagues to reject H. Res. 399 and instead join my efforts to pass the Family Education Freedom Act. If Congress gets Washington off the backs and out of the pocketbooks of parents, American children will be better off.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 399, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The title of the resolution was amended so as to read:

Resolution urging the Congress and the President to work to fully fund the Federal Government's responsibility under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SENSE OF THE HOUSE THAT SOCIAL PROMOTION IN AMERICA'S SCHOOLS SHOULD BE ENDED

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 401) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that social promotion in America's schools should be ended and can be ended through the use of high-quality, proven programs and practices, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 401

Whereas high student achievement and academic advancement are vitally important to our Nation's schools and the future success of America's workforce;

Whereas some pupils proceed through school without having mastered the knowledge and skills required of them, and graduate from high school ill-equipped to handle college-level work or obtain an entry-level job;

Whereas "social promotion", the practice of moving pupils from one grade to the next regardless of whether they have the knowledge and skills necessary for the next level, is one reason for a pupil's inadequate academic achievement levels;

Whereas research has shown that retention, the customary alternative policy to social promotion, is also an inadequate response to the problem in that pupils are usually presented with the same instructional practices and materials that were ineffective the first time around;

Whereas to help underachieving students learn, it is essential that policies and programs address the underlying causes of failure and rectify the problems through various proven instruction practices;

Whereas high-quality teacher training and education, and other proven practices will provide our teachers with the tools necessary to educate our Nation's children and work toward high academic achievement by students;

Whereas social promotion policies already have been abolished in Louisiana, Arkansas, Florida, New Mexico, North Carolina, South Carolina, West Virginia, and in Chicago, Illinois, Portsmouth, Virginia, Long Beach, California, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and

Whereas the abolishment of social promotion policies have been proposed in California, Michigan, Wisconsin, Delaware, Texas, Oklahoma, New York, Washington, D.C., and in Boston, Massachusetts, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Now, therefore, be it Resolved,

That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) ending social promotion should be addressed in America through a coordinated effort by government officials, teachers, and parents committed to high academic achievement of students;

(2) State Education Agencies and local educational agencies that receive Federal funds should make every effort to address and end social promotion;

(3) the problems associated with social promotion can be resolved effectively through a commitment to provide high-quality train-

ing and education for our teachers, and the use of other proven practices; and

(4) States should adopt high, rigorous standards and standards-based assessments aimed at requiring academic accountability with the specific aim of ending social promotion and raising student achievement.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. RIGGS) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MARTINEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. RIGGS).

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, obviously I rise to support the resolution and urge my colleagues, our colleagues, to approve this sense of Congress resolution that social promotions in our schools should end.

The very first thing I want to do, because I may interject a few more partisan remarks a little bit later or remarks more aligned with the Republican philosophy on education, is salute and thank my very good friend, the ranking member of the committee that I am very privileged and honored to chair, the gentleman from California (Mr. MARTINEZ) for his leadership on this issue. I want the record to show that it was Congressman MARTINEZ's leadership in this area that resulted in this legislation reaching the House floor today. He initially approached me and suggested that we direct our attention in the subcommittee on the problem of social promotions, and I think as every Member of this body knows, particularly any Member that has attended a State of the Union address, the two recent State of the Union addresses by the President, or for that matter reviewed a transcript of his addresses, they would know that the President has spoken, and I think very sincerely, of the problem of social promotion in American education today in this very Chamber.

So I am pleased to join the gentleman from California (Mr. MARTINEZ) and by extension President Clinton and others who share this concern in supporting this resolution.

The act of promoting a child from grade to grade or for that matter even allowing a child to graduate from junior high school or high school regardless of his or her readiness; that is to say, regardless of what that child has learned and what they can demonstrate they know, is a very real problem in American education today, and as I mentioned, the President has spoken of this phenomenon, and many of us who also hold positions of elected responsibility have spoken of our concern that children are too often promoted from grade to grade or even graduated as much on the basis of what we might call good behavior and seat time as on the basis of what they know and can demonstrate that they have learned.

The gentleman from California (Mr. MARTINEZ) and I believe that promotions should be based on both the academic performance and the relative individual development readiness of